hackNY Application Guide for 2020

Emily Koagedal Follow
Oct 8, 2019 · 5 min read

Apply for hackNY 2020 fellowship

Here at hackNY we value transparency and we want to do everything we can to make sure you bring YOU to your hackNY application! Here you will find some advice and guidance from our amazing alumNY who will be the ones reviewing your application for the 2020 fellowship and who have also been in your exact same position! Hopefully you will find that most of your questions will be answered below.

We're going to talk about the application in three parts: essay questions, code sample, and best ways to showcase yourself!

Essay Questions

The essay portion is where you are able to demonstrate who you are, not just as someone in the tech industry, but all aspects of your personality! The hackNY application requires more essay type questions than most job applications, but that means you have more opportunities to let your personal voice shine!

> community or being someone who is a crucial part of that community." — *Sam Azouzi, Class of 2019*

There are lots of different ways to demonstrate your personality through these questions. For the ones that ask you to elaborate on your experience…

> *"I used my resume as a guide to figure out what to talk about. I also focused a lot on my research experience in college since I was really passionate about that, but I also mentioned some of my past internships and student orgs I was involved in too." — Noah Keppers, Class of 2018*

For more personal questions, it is great to be open and candid in your response. hackNY focuses a lot on our social good initiative, so spending time on the social good question is very important because we want to know what you care about.

> *"For the social good question, I talked about my work on an Arabic data annotation project that paid refugees to annotate data to train Optical Character Recognition models. It's something I spent a lot of time on, so most of the work was explaining and describing the work in a brief enough format that the reader wouldn't get bored or confused." — Will Held, Class of 2017*

Code Sample

The code sample is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your technical skill, and what you value when writing code. However, this is not meant to be a daunting question and you should approach it like you would a personal essay question.

> *"For my code sample, I chose a piece of code that was meaningful to me, but also demonstrated my technical skill. The first time I ever coded was with Girls Who Code and when we made the game 2048. It was a pretty simple implementation, but making a complete game was a big accomplishment for me. However the code sample that I ended up attaching to my hackNY application was from when I had to make 2048 again for a class in college. It was a much harder version without much boiler plate code. This was*

have a passion for tech and for learning. Show us a piece of code that shows that you can push yourself technically, and that you are also open to learning new skills, whether that is by yourself or in a team environment like a hackathon.

> *"For your code sample, lean towards simple clean code that solves a cool problem, rather than code that you think shows off technical prowess. If possible, choose a piece of code that you wrote because it was exciting, not because you had to. Be honest about the type of technology and the industries that you'd like to work on! We use this information to match you with a host start-up if you are accepted, and the worst thing that can happen is for us to place you with a company you wouldn't enjoy working at." — Will Held, Class of 2017*

Lastly… Bring Your Authentic Self!

Your hackNY application is an opportunity for you to show all sides of yourself including personality, technical skill, experience, leadership, and many more. We consider how you would fit into a community like hackNY as much as you should consider if hackNY is the right community for you.

> *"I tried to create a narrative that tied together my experiences and interests which were about lowering the barrier to entry for underrepresented people in tech. I wrote about organizing a women's colleges hackathon and my own struggles with imposter syndrome and how I saw the hackNY community as a great place to explore my interests in tech and receive mentorship and support." — Kellie Dinh, Class of 2018*

It is also important to think about what works best for you when working on this application. Some people need to constantly change their answer and re-read their answers, and some people deliver their best work on the first try.

> *"I think my hackNY application is one of the most authentic applications I've written, in that regard. I didn't have to think hard about any of the written answers. It has a conversational tone — maybe a few too many exclamation points, but it's pretty easy to read and doesn't (I hope LOL) read as pretentious." — Andrea Dean, Class of 2017*

Focusing on the **why** portion of a question is just as important or even more important as the **what** aspect. We want to know **why** you chose this piece of code,

We also want to reiterate that hackNY has accepted many applicants who have applied more than once! A large part of our alumNY applied 2 or 3 times, or reapplied during the rolling period. It is a great skill to be able to look back on your application and think about how you can improve on it and show how you have grown in a year.

Final Thoughts

Hopefully, this guide gives you a better idea on how to approach your hackNY application. Linked below are a couple alumNY's applications where they break down what they put in their application a bit deeper! If you have anymore specific questions please email **info@hackny.org.** And most importantly… don't forget to apply by the deadline!

- John Philip, Class of 2019

- Kevin Liao, Class of 2018

- Andrea Dean, Class of 2017

- Jacob Aronoff, Class of 2017

- Jun Woo Shin, Class of 2017

- Sakib Jalal, Class of 2016

- Sam Couch, Class of 2015

- Cheryl Wu, Class of 2015

- Kyle Ryan, Class of 2014

- Kevin Yeh, Class of 2014

- Mike Swift, Class of 2013

WRITTEN BY

Emily Koagedal

Follow

HACK **N Y**   **hackNY**

Blog posts by members of the hackNY community

Follow